

Application No. 09/980,106
Filed: April 9, 2002
TC Art Unit: 1745
Confirmation No.: 1182

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 8, 11 and 14-19 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102. As addressed in an Examiner interview, claims 1-24 have been canceled. Applicants also respectfully note that previously added claims 25-28 are directed to subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner. Accordingly, claims 25-28 will be pending upon entry of the above amendments with each being in condition for allowance.

Any amendments to the claims should not be construed as acquiescence to any of the rejections by the Examiner and was done solely to expedite the prosecution of the application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the claims as originally filed in this or a separate application(s).

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections by the Examiner in view of the above amendments and the remarks herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-7, 9-13 and 20-24 have been objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, although the Examiner has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants previously added claims 25-28 with each of which being directed to the indicated allowable subject matter.

Specifically, claim 25 includes all of the limitations of claims 5, 3 and 1. Claims 26 and 27 include all of the limitations of claims 6, 2 and 1 and of claims 12, 8 and 1, respectively. Claim 28 also includes all of the limitations of claims 21, 4, 19, 2 and 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit

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that claims 25-28 are directed to allowable subject matter such that each is in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

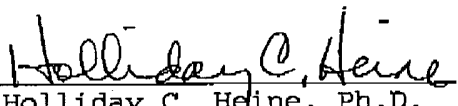
Based on the entry of amendments and remarks presented herein, reconsideration and withdrawal of all the rejections and allowance of the application with all pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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